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FORMAL INSTALLATION OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ALUMNI CHAPTER

The meeting for the installation of the first alumni chapter of the Society of the Sigma Xi took the form of a banquet held in the Ebbitt House in Washington, D. C., on the evening of February 19, at which more than forty members were present including several ladies.

After the dinner, Doctor Marcus Benjamin, president of the chapter, made the following introductory address:

"Ten years ago at the mid-summer meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science held in Ithaca, a dinner was given in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Sigma Xi, and as I had then but recently been chosen to alumni membership in the chapter at Columbia, I gladly took advantage of the opportunity to learn more of the organization by which I had been so graciously honored by an election. On that occasion President Williams, President Nichols, as well as others spoke, and as I was so fortunate as to be placed next Mrs. Williams, I learned much concerning the Society. It was at that time the suggestion was made that an alumni chapter would be highly desirable in Washington where so many members of the Sigma Xi were engaged in professional scientific work. Again in 1908 the desirability of establishing a Washington alumni chapter was referred to at the convention held here during Convocation Week, but it was not possible to undertake the organization of a chapter until two years ago.

"Of the beginnings of this chapter fortunately our secretary with creditable zeal has placed on record the exact facts and I will read the following brief extract from his report which appeared in the June issue of the SIGMA XI QUARTERLY:

The first active steps toward the formation of an alumni chapter of the Society of the Sigma Xi in the District of Columbia were taken on January 2, 1914, when Marcus Benjamin (Columbia), originator of the movement, Edmund Heller (Stanford), Marcus W. Lyon, Jr. (Brown), and Paul Bartsch (Iowa), met in the latter's office in the new National Museum to consider plans for the organization of such a chapter. Seven additional local members of the Sigma Xi representing various scientific activities in Washington and widely scattered universities were asked to associate themselves with the movement. These persons were: Dr. L. O. Howard (Cor-

nell), Dr. B. H. Ransom (Nebraska), Dr. T. S. Palmer (California), Mr. F. J. Katz (Chicago), Dr. J. E. Pogue (Yale), Mr. W. R. Maxon (Syracuse), and Dr. B. W. Evermann (Indiana).

A majority of the members of this larger committee met one week later in Dr. Bartsch's office. Dr. Benjamin was chosen chairman and Dr. Lyon secretary. Committees were appointed to draw up a constitution and by-laws, and to draft a letter to invite the local members of the Society to join in forming an alumni chapter.

The following week, January 16, 1914, the organization committee met again in the same place. After an informal discussion a tentative constitution and by-laws were adopted, and the secretary was instructed to send out the following letter:

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CHAPTER OF THE SIGMA XI

Washington, D. C., January 23, 1914.

You are invited to attend a meeting of members of Sigma Xi in Room 43, new building of the National Museum, on Friday, January 30, at 4 P. M.

In recognition of the peculiar desirability and the need of a Chapter of Sigma Xi in this city, it is proposed to effect a permanent organization which shall petition the Council to charter an Alumni Chapter.

Please indicate on the enclosed card whether or not you will be present, and mail it to the Secretary of the Organization Committee.

Fraternally yours,

THE ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE.

In response to this letter, on Friday, January 30, 1914, fifty-four local members of the Sigma Xi met at four o'clock in the afternoon, in Room 43 of the new National Museum building to consider the formation of the new chapter. Fifty other persons expressed by card their desire to become members of the proposed chapter. The secretary had sent out 225 letters of invitation and had received 135 replies. The desirability of the formation of an alumni chapter was discussed and a letter from Professor J. McKeen Cattell, then President of the Society of the Sigma Xi, was read, expressing his pleasure at the organization of the proposed chapter.

The constitution and by-laws submitted by the organization committee were tentatively adopted. Dr. Benjamin was chosen as temporary president, and Dr. Lyon as temporary secretary-treasurer. The organization committee was instructed to continue the work of organization and to apply to the general Society for a charter.

On February 3, 1914, a formal letter of application for a charter was sent to President Cattell. This application contained the names of 109 local members of the Sigma Xi who had signified their desire for the chapter.

In a letter dated December 12, 1914, President Cattell notified Dr. Benjamin that the petition for the formation of the District of Columbia Chapter had gone the rounds of all the chapters of the Society, and that a charter would be granted to the local members of the Sigma Xi.

"If you will permit me a few more words of historical reminiscence I would say that long years ago I became a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and during the time since it has been my good fortune to meet many, if not most of the scientific men of our country. Thus it happens that for a score or more of years I have known our distinguished president, Dr. Charles S. Howe, of the School of Applied Science in Cleveland, Ohio. He is the last and a worthy successor of Williams, Williston, Nichols, Eddy, and Cattell.

"And now, Mr. President Howe, I have the very great honor to present to you these ladies and gentlemen for installation as the first alumni chapter of the Society of the Sigma Xi. Let me add that, as you well know, every one of them by her or his devotion to scientific studies, while an undergraduate in some college or university, earned an election to our honor fraternity. Their names are therefore already enrolled on the roster of the Sigma Xi. But Mr. President, they are more than this; for by specializing in some particular field of science they have gained increased knowledge which under the auspices of this great government, many of them are returning to the people in the shape of practical information for their betterment. They are still young, but I have no hesitancy in saying that in years to come many of them will achieve distinction in science that will bring not only honor to themselves but also add luster to the glory of the Sigma Xi."

President Howe in a few well chosen words in virtue of his high office then installed the Chapter by presenting the charter to Doctor Benjamin.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Petitioners for a Chapter of the Sigma Xi

Your petition for a chapter of the Sigma Xi to be established at Washington, D. C., has been favorably acted upon by the Council of the Society and also by the Chapters. I am, therefore, empowered by the Constitution to declare to you that your petition has been granted and that a chapter is hereby established in Washington, D. C., to be known as the District of Columbia Alumni Chapter. It gives me very great pleasure to hand to your president, Dr. Marcus C. Benjamin, the charter with the names of the petitioners

inscribed thereon and signed and sealed by the grand officers of the Society. I heartily congratulate you upon the success which has crowned your efforts.

The presiding officer accepted the charter for the new Chapter, and after reading it to the members, expressed his appreciation to President Howe for the honor that had been done to the Chapter, transferring the charter to the custody of the Secretary.

President Howe then delivered an address which appears elsewhere in this issue.

Doctor Benjamin on behalf of the Chapter thanked President Howe for the address and invited Doctor Howard to officially convey the appreciation of the members present for the eloquent and instructive address.

Meanwhile Professor Thomas H. Norton, who after seventeen years of professorial labors at the University of Cincinnati had relinquished his chair to investigate the chemical industries of Europe, was introduced and entertained the Chapter with a most fascinating address as follows:

"Mr. President and members of the District of Columbia Alumni Chapter of the Sigma Xi:

"I esteem it a distinguished honor to be the guest of your chapter at its first annual banquet. I esteem it no less an honor to pass an evening by the side of your President, an old and cherished friend, one who has contributed in so notable a degree to the advancement of organized effort throughout the nation to maintain our scientific, historic, and patriotic ideals. I congratulate him on being the prime mover to call into existence the first alumni chapter of your Society, and I congratulate you all upon having so successfully testified to the solidarity of the scientific spirit in the capitol of our country by creating a new bond of union, a new center of stimulating companionship.

"Without being duly and officially accredited for the purpose, I feel, however, that I am fully empowered by your sister organization, the Phi Beta Kappa Association in the District of Columbia, to extend to your chapter hearty congratulations, as you take your place among the vital energizing factors of this city's intellectual life. Side by side Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi stand in friendly unison representing the ideals of American scholarship. The older sister, dating from the opening year of our nation's existence, emphasizes

the acquisition of the world's treasures of thought and expression, the skillful, forceful use of these tools in fashioning new concepts of law, religion, politics, economics—all that is embraced in that grand old Greek word *Φιλοσοφία*. The younger sister grants her laurel wreath to those who wrest from nature her secrets, who render her innumerable resources and the immutable laws of the universe tributary to the progress of mankind towards higher, freer, happier standards of existence, physical, intellectual, and spiritual.

"To some extent one is typified by contemplation, the other by action. The one opens its portals traditionally to those who have mastered human love; the open sesame to the other's abode is accomplishment. And so the two organizations will move along neighboring paths here diverging, there approaching, each contributing to that magnificent sum total of American scholarship, so rapidly becoming the dominant factor in this twentieth century.

* * * *

"As my gaze passes over the circle of keen, alert faces grouped about this festal board, I think instinctively of your counterparts across the sea, the thousands of those who on American soil, in American universities would have received the symbol of your Society. Scores of them are known to me personally, joined by bands of friendship dating back more decades than I like to confess. Today, almost without exception, their attainments and their talents are devoted to perfecting means for the destruction of their fellow-men. Their numbers are swiftly dwindling. Each hour almost witnesses stars against the names of those who might be the Huxleys, the Pasteurs, the Bunsens, and the Helmholtzes of the century upon which we have barely entered.

"You, on the contrary, are devoting every power and every effort to increasing the comfort and happiness of your fellow citizens. The initial years of Phi Beta Kappa were synchronous with the birth throes of our nation, with years of struggle, sacrifice, and bloodshed. May the early years of Sigma Xi, and especially the youth of this chapter, be free from scenes of conflict other than those resultant from a struggle with the obstacles and difficulties offered by nature to the mastery of our globe. When your chapter celebrates its silver and its golden anniversaries, may you look back upon years of peace in our nation, free from the clang of trumpet

and the crash of shell, crowned alone by the triumphs of science over matter, of truth over error."

Doctor L. O. Howard was then called upon and in a most happy manner expressed the thanks of the Chapter to President Howe.

Professor Bartsch outlined very briefly the possible policy for the organization, following which Doctor Lyon and Doctor Harper spoke briefly. The meeting then adjourned.

M. W. LYON, JR., *Secretary.*

MEMBERS PRESENT AT SIGMA XI INSTALLATION DINNER,

WASHINGTON, D. C., FEBRUARY 19, 1916

Thomas H. Norton Marcus Benjamin, Charles S. Howe,
President of Chapter President of Society

Isaac King Phelps,
Vice-president

Paul Bartsch,
Chairman of
Entertainment Committee

M. W. Lyon, Jr., *Secretary*

D. R. Harper, 3rd, *Treasurer*

A. B. Clawson

H. Hasselbring

W. N. Berg

Neil E. Stevens

Lloyd W. Schad

Irwin G. Priest

Donald H. Sweet

George H. Ashley

Alfred R. Schultz

Bert Russell

J. Davidson

J. Rosenbaum

H. W. Vinnall

Clyde E. Leighty

J. M. Stedman

Walter F. Baughman

Edgar T. Wherry

L. O. Howard

C. E. Patrick

Louis S. Murphy

Arthur C. Spencer

Samuel T. Dana

E. Alberta Read

Vera K. Charles

C. L. Shear

T. S. Palmer

Arthur W. Gray

Maurice C. Hall

B. H. Ransom

E. F. Phillips

H. L. Shantz

L. L. Harter

Charlotte W. Potter

Alden A. Potter